

REMARKS

This Application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action mailed April 20, 2006. Applicants amend Claims 4, 13 and 15. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and favorable action in this case.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants note with appreciation the indication by the Examiner that Claims 11-15, 17-19, 21, 22, 24 and 25 are directed to allowable subject matter and that Claims 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form.

Claim Objections

The Office Action objects to Claims 4, 13 and 15 because of informalities. Pursuant to the request of the Examiner, Claims 4, 13 and 15 are amended.

The Office Action objects to Claims 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Each of Claims 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 depend from Claim 1. For the reasons discussed below, Applicants respectfully contend that Claim 1 is patentably distinguishable from U.S. Patent No. 5,923,663 issued to *Bontemps* et al. ("*Bontemps*") and U.S. Patent No. 6,175,865 issued to *Dove* et al. ("*Dove*"). Therefore, Applicants respectfully contend that Claims 2, 3, 5, 6 and 9 are allowable in their present format.

Section 102 Rejections

The Office Action rejects Claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §102(a) as being anticipated by *Bontemps* and *Dove*. Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for the reasons stated below.

Claim 1 is directed to a communication coupling including a first communication port having first and second paths of communication. The coupling further comprises a switch coupled with the first communication port. The switch has a first position

in which the port is operable to: (i) receive a first communication signal from a network component using a first communication path; and (ii) transmit a second communication signal using a second communication path. The switch also has a second position in which the port is operable to: (i) receive the first communication signal from the network component using the second communication path; and (ii) transmit the second communication signal from the network component using the first communication path.

The switch alternates which communication path transmits and which receives signals from the network component. In the first position of the switch, the port is operable to receive using the first communication path and transmit using the second communication path. In the second position of the switch, the port is operable to transmit using the first communication path and receive using the second communication path. Neither *Bontemps* nor *Dove* teaches each of these limitations.

The Office Action identifies the analog switch of *Bontemps* as disclosing the switch of Claim 1. *Bontemps* is directed to detecting an external device and establishing a working communication link. See *Bontemps* (Col. 3, ll. 44-46). To this end, *Bontemps* employs a switch that selectively couples the receive input of the physical layer device to the first and second contact sets of the port connector in first and second states, respectively. See *Bontemps* (Col. 3, ll. 52-56). In one state the switch performs a straight-through connection and in a second state the switch performs a crossover connection. See *Bontemps* (Col. 4, ll. 60-65). *Bontemps* does not teach a switch that alternates which of two communication paths transmits signals to and which path receives signals from a network component.

Applicants note that the Office Action relies upon over three hundred lines of text and three complete figures of *Bontemps* to support the rejection of Claim 1. To the extent that the Examiner intends to maintain the rejection of Claim 1 over *Bontemps*, Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner more specifically cite the particular part of *Bontemps* that is relied upon to support the rejection, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. 1.104 (c)(2) and 35 U.S.C. § 132.

The Office Action also relies on the media switch 20 of *Dove* as disclosing the switch of Claim 1. The four contacts of media switch 20 are adapted to be switched between a first and second position. *See Dove* (Col. 3, ll. 63-66). In the first position of media switch 20, the transmit pair 22 are connected with receive contact pins 1 and 2, and the pair 24 are connected to transmit pair pins 3 and 6. *See Dove* (Col. 3, ll. 60-63; Fig. 6). In the second position, contacts 1 and 2 are connected to the twisted pair 24 and contacts 3 and 6 are connected to pair 22. *See Dove* (Col. 3, l. 63 - Col. 4, l. 1; Fig. 6). Switch 20 effectively switches the receive and transmit contacts between pairs 22 and 24. *See Dove* (Col. 4, ll. 1-4). The position of switch 20 does not affect which path (first or second) is used to transmit signals to and which is used to receive signals from a network component.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully contend that neither *Bontemps* nor *Dove* discloses each of the limitations of Claim 1. Applicants respectfully request that the rejections of Claim 1 be withdrawn.

Section 103 Rejections

The Office Action rejects Claims 4, 7 and 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over *Dove* as applied to Claim 1 above, and further in view of U.S. Publication No. 2002/0028521 for Sherlock ("*Sherlock*"). Applicants respectfully traverse these rejections for the reasons stated below.

Claims 4, 7, and 8 each depend from Claim 1. As discussed above, *Dove* does not teach the switch of Claim 1, and the cited portions of *Sherlock* do not provide the elements missing from *Dove*. Therefore, Claims 4, 7, and 8 are patently distinguishable from *Dove* and *Sherlock* for at least the same reasons discussed above with regard to Claim 1.

Conclusion

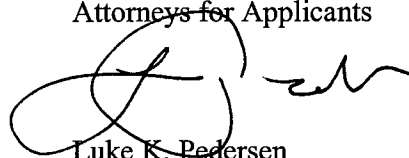
Applicants have made an earnest attempt to place this case in condition for allowance. For the foregoing reasons, and for other apparent reasons, Applicants respectfully request full allowance of all pending Claims.

If the Examiner feels that a telephone conference or an interview would advance prosecution of this Application in any manner, the undersigned attorney for Applicants stands ready to conduct such a conference at the convenience of the Examiner.

Applicants believe no fee is due. However, should there be a fee discrepancy, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any required fees or credit any overpayments to Deposit Account No. **02-0384** of **Baker Botts L.L.P.**

Respectfully submitted,

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